

Message Text

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TO USMISSION OECD PARIS PRIORITY

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TAGS: ELAB, OECD

SUBJECT: PROPOSED LABOR MINISTERS MEETING

REF: OECD PARIS 22869, C(75)147

1. WE SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL TO HOLD A MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING OF THE MANPOWER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE IN 1976 UNDER THE CONDITIONS AGREED TO AT THE JULY MEETING OF THE MSAC.

2. THERE IS A MINOR PROBLEM WITH THE DATES SUGGESTED FOR THE MEETING. THE SECRETARY OF LABOR WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SPEND TWO WEEKDAYS IN TRAVEL FOR A TWO DAY MEETING. WE RECOMMEND THE DATES BE CHANGED, PREFERABLY TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MARCH 5 AND 6. IF THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE, THEN MARCH 4 AND

5 IS THE SECOND CHOICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND INFORMATION MAY BE USEFUL FOR
SEPT 18 COUNCIL MEETING:

3. WITHIN THE MSAC THE STICKING POINT IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON THE MINISTERIAL MEETING WAS ITS PURPOSE AND AGENDA. USDEL AT MSAC INSISTED THAT:

A. THE MEETING MUST FOCUS ON THE EMPLOYMENT ISSUE WITH OBJECTIVE BEING REVISION OF THE 1964 RECOMMENDATION ON AN ACTIVE MANPOWER POLICY OR A SEPARATE 1976 POLICY RECOMMENDATION WHICH WILL HAVE THE EFFECT OF EXPANDING AND UPDATING THE 1964 RECOMMENDATION.

B. THERE MUST BE NO POLICY STATEMENTS ON BROAD SOCIAL POLICY ISSUES AS SUCH (I.E., POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS REQUESTING MEMBER NATIONS TO TAKE ACTION TO IMPLEMENT GENERAL POLICIES IN THE AREA OF INTEGRATED SOCIAL POLICIES, QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE, ETC.).

C. THE AGENDA MUST BE STRUCTURED IN A MANNER WHICH ATTEMPTS TO LIMIT DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL POLICY ISSUES TO THOSE WHICH ARE DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO EMPLOYMENT/MANPOWER POLICY ISSUES.

4. THE U.S. DELEGATION SUCCEEDED IN REACHING AGREEMENT IN MSAC ON THESE BASIC POINTS. OUR ONLY CONCESSION WAS TO AGREE THAT MINISTERS COULD DISCUSS THE WORK PROGRAM OF THE MANPOWER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE UNDER THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA ITEM WHICH WILL GIVE MINISTERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON BROAD SOCIAL ISSUES. HOWEVER, NO SECRETARIAT PAPER WAS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTERS AS A BASIS FOR THIS DISCUSSION (THE SUBJECT WILL BE INTRODUCED IN AN ORAL REPORT BY THE PERMANENT CHAIRMAN ON THE WORK PROGRAM OF THE COMMITTEE) AND NO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS WILL RESULT FROM THIS DISCUSSION. THE U.S. DID AGREE, HOWEVER, TO ALLOW SOME VAGUE STATEMENTS ON SOCIAL POLICY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE, AND A STATEMENT INDICATING THE IMPORTANCE OF, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND GIVING STRONG SUPPORT TO, FUTURE STUDY AND WORK BY THE OECD ON A WIDE RANGE OF SOCIAL/MANPOWER PROGRAMS.

5. DURING A MEETING WITH SECRETARY GENERAL VAN LENNEP SEPT. 3, SECRETARY OF LABOR DUNLOP STATED THAT THE MEETING SHOULD BE A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT AND PAST MANPOWER/EMPLOYMENT POLICIES RATHER THAN A "BLESSING ON OUR GOOD WORKS"

DISCUSSION. HE ALSO INDICATED A SPECIAL INTEREST IN REGIONAL MANPOWER/EMPLOYMENT POLICIES (I.E., POLICIES TO DEAL WITH SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC AREAS, SECTORS, INDUSTRIES, ETC.).

6. OECD DOCUMENT C(75)147 DOES REFLECT THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN THE MSAC ON THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING, ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE SPECIFIC DRAFT LANGUAGE AGREED AT MSAC FORBIDING ANY POLICY STATEMENT ON BROAD SOCIAL ISSUES AS SUCH HAS BEEN DELETED. THIS DOES NOT

PRESENT SPECIAL PROBLEM BUT IF YOU BELIEVE IT IS DESIRABLE YOU MAY AT YOUR DISCRETION REMIND THE COUNCIL OF THIS AGREEMENT.

7. WE ARE CONCERNED BY THE IMPLICATION IN PARAGRAPH 9 OF C(75)147 THAT ALL PREPARATORY WORK ON THE MINISTERIAL WILL BE COMPLETED AT THE DECEMBER MEETING OF THE MSAC. THIS MAY BE TRUE BUT EITHER OR BOTH THE WORKING PARTY ON EMPLOYMENT AND/OR THE SPECIAL WORKING PARTY TO PREPARE THE MINISTERIAL MEETING MAY HAVE TO MEET EARLY IN 1976 TO REACH FINAL AGREEMENT ON THE POLICY STATEMENT, ISSUE PAPERS, AND COMMUNIQUE. WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT IT BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT, IF NECESSARY, THESE WORKING GROUPS WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET ONCE OR TWICE AFTER THE DECEMBER MEETING TO COMPLETE THEIR WORK.
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